WASHINGTON, DC—After reviewing the President's most recent request for an emergency supplemental to address the devastation of Hurricanes Ivan and Jeanne, Congressman Sanford Bishop, a member of the House Committee on Appropriations, appealed to the Committee's Chairman for more funds to address the growing agricultural crisis in South Georgia.

"The President's request for only \$400 million for all of the nation's agricultural producers suffering crop losses is far from adequate," said Congressman Bishop. "Our initial estimates for the state of Georgia alone calculate a loss of approximately \$400 million due to hurricanes Charley and Frances, once damages from Ivan and Jeanne are included this number will increase dramatically.

"Federal assistance will be crucial to alleviating the short and long-term impact that these storms will have on our family farmers. The unprecedented barrage of storms this year has caused incalculable devastation, but the losses of Georgia's farmers must not go unrecognized."

The House of Representatives is expected to pass the emergency supplemental later this week. Congressman Bishop's letter to Chairman Young of the House Appropriation's Committee is attached below. For more information on disaster assistance visit FEMA's website at www.fema.gov or GEMA's storm recovery website at www.gemainfo.com.

The Honorable C. W. Bill Young Chairman Committee on Appropriations H218 Capitol Washington, D.C. 20515

## Dear Chairman Young:

I am writing to express my concern regarding the President's most recent FY2004 emergency supplemental proposal, and in particular, proposed funding for the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to address the impact of Hurricanes Ivan and Jeanne.

Under the President's request, USDA would be provided an additional \$400 million for much needed financial assistance to agricultural producers suffering crop losses from the 2004 hurricanes. Unfortunately, the devastation caused these hurricanes, and the resulting agricultural losses will undoubtedly far exceed the resources included in the President's latest request.

Preliminary estimates for the entire State of Georgia place the losses due to Hurricanes Charley and Frances at approximately \$400 million (e.g., cotton - \$150m; vegetables - \$100m; peanuts - \$100m; pecans - \$50m). Once final figures are available for the cumulative damage caused by all hurricanes this year, including Ivan and Jeanne, the projected agricultural loss statewide will no doubt increase significantly.

In my district, we are estimating that once a full accounting of damage is completed, the

combined agricultural losses resulting from just Hurricanes Charley and Frances alone could amount to more than \$175 million. In practical terms, agricultural producers in my district could be looking at combined losses of as much as 60% - 75% in peanut and cotton production, not to mention pecans, vegetables and related crops.

As you know, my district is the largest producer of peanuts in the nation, as well as one of the top three producers of cotton. More importantly, without adequate Federal assistance, these losses may have a long-term disproportionate impact on our small family owned farms - - the backbone of agriculture in the nation.

I believe it is critical that adequate additional emergency funds and related resources be included in any upcoming supplemental and/or other legislative vehicle(s) for the USDA, which more accurately reflects the actual needs of not only Georgia, but all states which have been devastated by this year's hurricane season.

We have been keeping your staff updated on the latest loss data available from the State of Georgia. I appreciate your consideration and cooperation in this matter, and stand ready to do whatever I can to assist in this process.

With warmest personal regards, I remain

Sincerely,

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. Member of Congress